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| INFO | LOG-00 | AID-00 | ACQ-00 | CIAE-00 | DODE-00 | EB-00 | EUR-00 |
| | VC-00 | TEDE-00 | INR-00 | IO-00 | LAB-01 | L-00 | VCE-00 |
| | AC-00 | NSAE-00 | OIC-00 | OMB-00 | PA-00 | PM-00 | PRS-00 |
| | ACE-00 | P-00 | SP-00 | SS-00 | STR-00 | TRSE-00 | T-00 |
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 FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS
 TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7326
 INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BRASILIA PRIORITY
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 AMEMBASSY LA PAZ PRIORITY
 AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES PRIORITY
 HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY
 NSC WASHDC PRIORITY
 USINT HAVANA PRIORITY

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C O N F I D E N T I A L CARACAS 002577

NSC FOR CBARTON
 USCINCSO ALSO FOR POLAD
 STATE PASS USAID FOR DCHA/OTI

E.O. 12958: DECL: 08/03/2014
 TAGS: PGOV, PREL, PHUM, KDEM, ELAB, VE
 SUBJECT: VENEZUELAN REFERENDUM UPDATE: AUGUST 11

Classified By: Abelardo A. Arias, Political Counselor, for
 Reason 1.5(d)

 Summary

1. (C) The National Electoral Council (CNE) approved the Venezuelan NGO "Electoral Eye" as the only national observation group for the August 15 referendum. Beginning from six different points throughout Caracas and culminating on the highway, opposition supporters will begin a march to conclude the "Si" campaign August 12 in the afternoon. Coordinadora Democratica technicians who participated in the

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audit of the electronic voting machines August 8 announced their satisfaction with the security of the voting machines and the data transmission lines provided by CANTV August 11. Miranda State Governor Enrique Mendoza complained that the CNE planned to use numbered manual voting ballots, and thus would violate secrecy, to Organization of American States (OAS) representative Valter Pecly Moreira.

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National Observers

2. (U) The National Electoral Council (CNE) approved the Venezuelan NGO Ojo Electoral (Electoral Eye) as the only national observation group for the August 15 referendum. According to Eleazar Diaz Range, one of the directors of the Electoral Eye and editor of the daily newspaper Ultimas Noticias, the organization was formed at the suggestion of the National Democratic Institute (NDI) and is considered to be an unbiased electoral organization. The group has accepted technical assistance but not funding from NDI to maintain its credibility. The Electoral Eye board is considered by both the GOV and opposition to be bipartisan because of its pro-Chavez and anti-Chavez membership. Collaborating with other NGO's like Faith and Joy, the Electoral Eye will deploy around 500 national observers throughout Venezuela. In addition to verifying the validity of the referendum process, the Electoral Eye is also the only organization sanctioned by the CNE to perform a quick count on August 15.

Opposition Campaign Finale

3. (U) Beginning from six different points throughout Caracas and culminating on the capital's central highway, opposition supporters will march to conclude the campaign to recall President Hugo Chavez August 12 in the afternoon. The opposition organizers promised surprises, political speeches, concerts, and fireworks. Carlos Valero of the Coordinadora said several municipal police forces would provide security for the marchers. He claimed the opposition expects a peaceful march with around one million supporters attending.

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Valero said, "We will not march on Miraflores because we will be there on August 16."

Opposition Gives Voting Machines the "All Clear"

4. (U) Coordinadora Democratica technicians who participated in the audit of the electronic voting machines August 8 announced their satisfaction with the security of the Smartmatic machines and the data transmission lines provided by CANTV August 11. CNE representatives announced their satisfaction with the machines August 9.

Opposition Denunciations

5. (U) Miranda State Governor Enrique Mendoza complained that the CNE planned to use numbered manual voting ballots, and thus would violate secrecy, to Organization of American States (OAS) representative Valter Pecly Moreira. Mendoza said the manual ballots violate the secrecy of the vote because there are numbers imprinted on the ballots that can be used to track a voter's choice. Upon departing the meeting with Mendoza, Pecly said the OAS would communicate the opposition's concerns to the CNE. CNE President Francisco Carrasquero denied there were any identifying marks on the manual ballots charging opposition members of becoming accustomed to making false statements.

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